

Where can we find true peace? When we think about peace we often I think about the absence of conflict. You may think about countries that are no longer at war or people that are no longer fighting. But in God's Word peace is about much more than the absence of conflict. In God's Word, the idea of peace is the idea of wholeness and restoration to how things should have been. You may have heard the Hebrew word shalom, which means peace.

This morning we are going to think about peace. We live in a world that is longing for peace and restoration. War violence and conflict ravages the globe. Some conflicts that are famous and we know of and there are so many more that we don't see or we just don't care about.

And all of us internally are also longing and waiting for peace. For many of us the holidays are not a peaceful time. They are filled with grief and frustration and pain. And we long and wish that something could quiet the noise of our souls and give us peace.

This morning as we look at I say a chapter 9 I want you to see how Jesus brings peace. And I want you to see that this kind of peace and restoration is available to all of us. Let's take a closer look. Our hope in Advent is that Jesus is the one who can bring us this peace.

Point 1: **Jesus brings peace to the world (v. 1-5).**

The birth of Jesus is the announcement that God is bringing peace to this world.

And the peace that He is bringing is one that they desperately hoped for. It is something that Nations hope for.

They hope to live in times of peace and prosperity instead of times when they are ravaged by War.

Instead of a time where you have to worry about your children being drafted into service.

Instead of a time where you have to wonder if you need to flee your home because it might get bombed.

Jesus came to bring an end to war, all conflict, and to bring peace.

And Israel for themselves hope that their nation would experience this peace.

It is a peace that they have not felt for a very long time.

Even when they were an independent nation with their own kings most of those kings spent many years at war or under the threat of war.

But their hope was that when the Messiah would come their nation would have peace.

"But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,"

The prophecy of the future what God is promising to do.

That currently Israel is in anguish and gloom.

Things are not going well.

The prophet reminds them of the former time.

The names mentioned here are two of the 12 tribes of Israel.

They are two of the tribes who are most in the North.

And they haven't been a part of Israel for a very long time because they were conquered and taken.

This is part of why Israel is in anguish.

Their nation has been split apart their land has been stolen their people slaughtered.

In this happened because God allowed it because of their disobedience.

Because the condition for Israel to be in the land has always been obedience to God.

Whenever they fail to obey God to obey God's commands and to submit to the scriptures and the prophets then they are exiled and taken out.

And the only way they are righteously allowed to return is if they repent.

So the loss of land is not just a problem of national pride it's spiritually shameful.

It reminds them of their failures and sin.

But the prophet Isaiah says that is going to be the former times.
That's going to be the old days because the new days are coming.

"but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations."

Then Isaiah starts to talk about the latter days.
The days that are coming in the future.

And you will notice throughout this chapter the tense of the verbs is different than you might expect.

He doesn't say that this will happen the Messiah will be born the light will shine.

He describes it as if it has happened already.

This is why he can say that God has made glorious.

The people have seen a great light.

For to us a child is born.

I'm not going to get into all of that technicalities and intricacies of the way Hebrew verb tenses work although some of you might really wish that I would do that.

Because you don't necessarily need to understand that in order to understand what Isaiah is doing.

What you do need to understand is that this is prophetic speech.

God is telling you what is going to happen.

And when God tells you what will happen in the future it is as if it is already been done.

You can talk about it in the past tense because God has already done it.

The present is just trying to catch up to what God has accomplished.

So this is why Isaiah will throughout the rest of the chapter talk about the future promises of the Messiah as if it is already happened.

Not because he thinks the Messiah has already come but because he trusts in God's promise.

So it is telling us that while Israel might be torn apart now in the days to come it will be glorious.

And that in days to come the Messiah is going to bring peace far beyond their land.

His peace will extend over the Jordan River which is their border.

Do you even uses a unique phrase of the Galilee of the Nations.

Isaiah is trying to show that the peace of the Messiah is going to extend into the entire world over every ocean.

Verse 2, **"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone."**

Again this is describing what it will be like when Jesus comes.

It will be like a massive light going off in the darkness.

It would be like someone trapped deep in a cave underground in the pitch black and the light of day breakthrough.

And the light will be so bright that even those far away will see it shine.

That even those who live and lands covered by the darkness of sin and Satan will see the light shine.

That happened literally didn't it when the three wise men from lands far off into the east saw a bright star shining in the dark sky.

And even though they were far away on them the light of Jesus shown and they came to see the Messiah.

But this isn't just about that star shining.

It is about that the birth of Jesus and the light that he brings to a dark world.

Verse 3, **"You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil."**

And what will the peace of Jesus look like?

It will be a peace that brings prosperity.

Because only when a nation is at peace can it grow freely.

So it says the nation will multiply.

The population will increase because no more young men are going off to be killed at war.

No more women are being taken as spoils.

And it's not just physical prosperity but the peace of Jesus will bring joy. People will no longer be filled with gloom and walking around with their heads low but will be filled with joy and gladness.

They will have the kind of joy as a farmer at harvest time.

Now you only have joy at harvest time if it is a good harvest.

It is when you finally go to collect the crops and they are bigger than you imagined.

It produced far more ears of corn than you thought possible.

A good harvest means the future looks bright.

They are provided for.

And it is the kind of joy people have after dividing the spoil.

It is the joy children have after dumping out all of the Halloween candy on the floor to see what they got.

Verse 4, **"For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian."**

One of the only ways to have peace in the world in when evil is defeated.

You cannot have peace between nations if one is enslaving another.

You cannot have peace when one nation bombs another.

But Jesus will bring peace by breaking of the power of those who bring war.

The yoke, the staff, the rod will all be broken.

The yoke, the staff, and the rod are all symbols of oppression.

So when God says that He's going to break and destroy them, He is talking about ruining the power of oppressive nations.

It would be like telling a slave, that one day you're gonna break the masters, whip and his rod.

The slave master would not be happy about it, but the oppressed would see it as their deliverance.

One day, Jesus will defeat evil's power .

And all of the things that it would use.

All of the tools the evil have in its possession.

Even things like a staff that could be used for good, but aren't

God will take from them and break them

And their hold on the world will be finished.

And He says that He will do this as on the day of Midian.

You can read about Israel's conflict and what God did to Midian in Judges, chapter 6 and 7.

It was one of the countries that because of Israel sin they were oppressed by.

And for seven years, Midian was ruthless.

Every single time they had a harvest Midian would come and steal it.

Every time they dared to venture outside with any of their animals Midian would come and would take them so much so that Israel was starving.

The people had to hide in caves because they dared not show their face outside.

But God sent and chose Gideon to save his people.

And even though Gideon only had 300 men, they defeated the Midianites who couldn't be counted.

They defeated them without ever having a lift their swords.

Because God did all of the work for them.

Likewise, it will be one day with Jesus.

The enemy will be there there will be more than can be counted.

But we will not have to lift a finger, and God will take care of it.

Verse 5, **"For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult, and every garment rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for the fire."**

Verse five gives the image of the enemy armies stuff being put in a pile and burned.

All of those soldiers.

All of those who would reveal against God, try to fight against him, and destroy others .

And all of their stuff that makes them seem so fierce and their armor, their trappings, their power, and their weapons will be taken from them by Jesus .

All of their armor and closer be covered in blood, because Jesus will win .
And then it will just be used to keep people warm during the winter.

And this is here to make clear that what Jesus is doing is just.

Most Empires when they conquer people take their stuff.

It is one of the hallmarks of having an Empire.

It is part of what helps fuel the modern versions of colonialism.

And it is what the Romans did when they brought their Roman peace.

Their prosperity and their peace that they offer the world after they slaughtered everyone and took all of their things so that it could be theirs.
Then they said aren't you so happy we brought you peace.

This is the way even modern countries act when they invade or attack one another because they want control over resources or land.

But Jesus's peace is not like the Roman's peace.

The Peace of Jesus is accomplished in the way that other Empires accomplish it.

Jesus does not destroy for gain but for justice.

This burning was what Israel was supposed to do when they entered the promised land and conquered the nations there.

They didn't to show that this was not about taking people's things.

In Jesus will not conquer the wicked because He wants their oil.

He will do so because it is right.

And He will do so to bring us all true and lasting peace in our world.
And that peace can only come when those who would ruin it and violate it
are converted or conquered.
This is our hope this Advent.
That one day Jesus will bring true peace to our world.

Point 2: **Jesus brings peace with God (v. 6-7).**

Jesus is the only one who can bring us peace.
Not just because no one else can bring true peace into our world.
But because no one else can give us peace with God.

Ever since the garden of Eden there is a problem between us and God.
Humanity is troubled and trapped in our sins.
Our sins put a barrier between us and God.
Our relationship with God is not as it should be.
And we cannot make it right.
We cannot wash ourselves clean.
We cannot fix what we have broken.

Why is Jesus the only one capable?

Because of who He is.

These next two verses do not just tell us the things that the Messiah will do
but they tell us who He is.

Verse 6, **"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the
government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince
of Peace."**

These are some of the most beautiful verses in Isaiah.
They might be familiar to a lot of you.
We usually read them around this time of year.
And it is good that we do.
Because they remind us of our hope for peace.

Again this is prophetic speech.
Isaiah is talking as if Jesus is already born.
But He is the child who is born.
He is the son who was given to humanity as our hope.

"The government shall be on His shoulder"

The government being on His shoulders means that He is in charge.
All of the Power and the authority of government is on Him.
He is the one who makes all the decisions.
He's the one to blame if anything went wrong.
But His shoulders can take it.
He can bear the weight of the responsibility because He's Jesus.

Look at all of His names.

"Wonderful Counselor,"

Wonderful here doesn't just mean that He's awesome.
It means that He will be a king of Wonders.
He will work miracles.
Wonder it's events and things that cannot be explained except by the power of God.
And Jesus worked many miracles.
Most of the stories in the gospels are of the Miracles that Jesus did.
If the people that He healed and the dead that He brought back to life.

And He's also the miracle-working counselor.
And when you hear counselor don't picture a school counselor or something like a therapist.
Isaiah didn't know what those are.
It means that Jesus would also have miraculous wisdom.
That He would know the right decision to make.
Which Jesus always did.
People were constantly amazed by His teaching and His insight.
In 2000 years later we gather here today to hear and try to understand some of the wisdom of what Jesus said.

"Mighty God"

Jesus is the Mighty God.
Because Jesus is filled with all the power of God.
Because Jesus is God.
He's not a created being.
He's not just a fancy angel.
He is not just a good teacher.
He is the Mighty God who created all things.

"Everlasting Father"

Everlasting father means the God has been Jesus's father forever.
Because Jesus was not created.
He is what we call the eternally begotten son.
There was never a time that Jesus did not exist and there was never a time that God was not His father.
And because Jesus is God.
And because Jesus is the son of God.
He is the one who can help us have peace with God.
He is the one who can repair the relationship.
He is the only one qualified to be our high priest or to be our mediator.

"Prince of Peace"

And Jesus is the Prince of Peace.
He is the one who can bring us true and lasting peace.
This is His name.
These titles can only be lived up to by Jesus.
Only the God-man could do it.

Earthly kings loved to give themselves big titles like this.
But they were never true.
There were only ever testimonies to their own arrogance and foolishness.
But Jesus can do those things.
Jesus truly is wonderful.
Jesus truly is the mighty God.

Jesus is the everlasting Father.
Jesus is the true Prince of Peace.
But what will this peace look like?

Verse 7, **"Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end,"**

Just about every nation and Earth has had peace at some point and time. Maybe it was just for a few short years or a few short days or maybe even just a few short minutes.

But the peace and prosperity that they bring doesn't last.

But the peace that Jesus brings will never end.

It will never stop it will never run out.

It won't be a. Of time that people look back to and say oh do you remember the good old days early in Jesus's reign.

Oh do you remember what happened before the recession or before the war before the pandemic.

When Jesus reigns his peace will come and it will never stop.

And His government will continue without end.

You know some of us in here are big government people.

Some of us in here are small government people.

Some of you when you read and it says that Jesus's government will get bigger and bigger that makes you twitch.

We can disagree on the size of government now today.

And that's fine.

But when Jesus comes there's no more disagreement.

We are all going to be big government people.

Because Jesus's government will get as big as he wants and it will never stop and it will be better than you could possibly imagine.

"on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this."

Again we see the Jesus will reign forever.

He will sit on King David's throne.
And the kingdom of God will be established.
Jesus will rule with righteousness and justice forever and ever.
And God is looking and longing to accomplish this.
The zeal of God means His passion and excitement and dedication to bringing his peace into our world.

Again because of who Jesus is,
because He is the prince of peace and the Everlasting God,
Now he can bring us peace with God.
Israel only got a foreshadowing and a glimpse of this.
Their expectation was purely on a literal and a physical peace and restoration here in the world.

But Jesus came to bring his peace with God.
We see this in many other scriptures predominantly Romans 5:1
"therefore since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Jesus came on Earth to die on the cross to give us peace.
He died in our place.
He bore our sins for us.
His death redeemed us and purchased our Ransom.
His death defeated sin.
And His death Justified us.
It made us no longer rebellious sinners who have ran from God but it made us righteous.
Not because of who we are but because of who Jesus is and what He did.

And our faith in Him through Jesus gives us peace with God.
Not just peace in the sense that like now God is not angry at us.
Peace in the sense that we have been restored to what our relationship with God should have been.

Just as Adam and Eve once got to walk in the garden in the cool of the day with God through Jesus Christ we get to be restored and relationship with him.

But this peace and that's just a vacation can only come through Jesus Christ the promised Son who was born of a virgin to bring us peace.

Point 3: **Embrace Jesus' peace.**

We need to embrace Jesus' peace.

He has brought His peace into the world.

He is bringing His peace into the world.

His peace is available to you.

Jesus brought His peace into the world through his life death and Resurrection.

But that peace that we can have with God does not just automatically come to everyone.

We have to receive it in faith.

We have to accept Jesus as our King.

We have to believe that Jesus really is the Prince of Peace.

We have to put our trust in him that he is worth following and worth giving our lives too.

We have to believe that he really is God that he really did come and die.

All of those are just another way of saying that you have to embrace Jesus.

That if you want to receive the Peace of Jesus you have to follow Jesus and you have to believe Jesus.

Some of you this morning have not experienced the Peace of Jesus because you're not following him.

Because you have not put your faith in Him.

I want to invite you to do so.

I want to tell you that the peace that Jesus offers is here at your fingertips and you can have it.

All you have to do is be willing to follow Jesus.

There's not a special prayer that you have to pray.

There's not a form that you need to fill out.
But you need to trust them and follow Him.

Those of us who have put our faith in Jesus who have experienced the peace with God that Jesus brings also should embrace the peace that Jesus offers in this life.

My favorite verse about the Peace of Jesus is in Philippians 4:7 **"it says and a peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."**

The previous verse he tells us to not be anxious but to pray and to make or request known to God and when we do we will gain the peace of God. You may have heard me pray this verse or pray that God would give you the peace that surpasses all understanding.

If you embrace the peace of Jesus it means that you can have peace in your soul and in your heart when it doesn't make any sense.

You can be calm and have inner peace even as your personal life falls apart.

You can have the peace that passes understanding even as you stand at the grave of a loved one.

You can have the peace that passes understanding even when you're facing the cancer diagnosis from the doctor and you can't believe that it's true.

You can have the peace that passes understanding even when you lose your job and you don't know if you're going to be able to find another one.

The peace that Jesus offers does not come from good breathing techniques.

The peace that Jesus offers doesn't come from having a strong fortitude. It's a peace that comes from Jesus in Jesus alone.

And if you are a follower of Jesus.

If you pray to Him and if you seek Him out,
then you can experience this peace.

This peace is not just for the pastors and for the super spiritual it is for the lowly and the weak and the beaten down and those who are barely hanging on.

Jesus's peace is here for you.

Don't let your hearts be troubled Church.

As we leave these walls as we go back into our lives embrace the peace that Jesus offers you.

Jesus will bring his peace one day when he returns.

And then it will be easy and you will get to experience it 100% of the time to 100% of its fullness.

But for now you can get a taste of that peace.

And you can feel the peace of God even as the World falls apart around you.

Embrace Jesus and embrace his peace.

Jesus brings peace to the world.

Jesus brings peace with God.

Embrace Jesus' peace.

At the end of our benediction each week as part of the dismissal I usually say go in peace.

That isn't meant to just be a fancy or Christian way of saying have a nice day.

I want to send us all back into the world with the Peace of Jesus.

And I want us to go back into the world having embraced the peace of Jesus so that we can participate with Jesus and the expanding of his peace throughout the world.